

Dialog newspaper to print biweekly, add online stories, videos

WILMINGTON, Del. – The Diocese of Wilmington will continue publishing The Dialog as a biweekly newspaper that will also expand its communications mission to the Internet with stories and video reports, Bishop W. Francis Malooly announced in August.

Last April, when the diocese cut jobs and services to help pay a \$77.4 million settlement to survivors of abuse by priests, The Dialog was slated to cease publication in the fall.

“We were fortunate enough to receive a gift of \$150,000 to assist in The Dialog’s budget for this first year,” the bishop said. “This, plus the money set aside by the diocese for a new communications plan and our intent to continue securing advertising revenue in the new newspaper, will fund its operation.”

The bishop’s Aug. 8 decision to keep The Dialog in business follows the recommendation of a special committee formed last spring to suggest a diocesan communications plan after the paper was closed. That committee urged the diocese to improve its use of electronic media and to produce a printed publication as well, noting The Dialog was a “very active, solid” means of informing and evangelizing every Catholic household, according to Monsignor J. Thomas Cini, vicar general.

The committee’s report emphasized the need for a paper and enhanced communication in the diocese to counter misinformation and rumors during a critical time for the church in the wake of bankruptcy, the sex abuse scandal and recent closings of schools.

The diocese has also retained a consultant, Daniel Medinger, president of Advertising Media Plus and former editor of The Catholic Review, to assist in the expansion of The Dialog coverage in new media.

Starting in October, The Dialog’s new print edition will be delivered biweekly to parishes for distribution in churches. Circulation by mail will end. The paper will

start a new website for Dialog stories and publish more information than can be included in its print editions. The Dialog will also develop an e-community in the diocese through reader emails gathered with the help of parishes, so parishioners can receive breaking news by text, photo and video.

The bishop named Joseph Kirk Ryan as The Dialog's editor/manager. Ryan, 60, who has filled in as editor since the departure of Jim Grant from the post in June, has been assistant editor since 2006 and previously served as editor/general manager of The Dialog for three years in the 1980s.

A former president of the Catholic Press Association, Ryan has also worked at The Catholic Review and The Catholic Standard and Times in Philadelphia.

Two other full-time employees will remain at the paper. Mike Lang will continue his reporting duties and assist with the new website. Virginia O'Shea will take up reporting duties along with her graphics and production work.